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World Renowned Environmental Leader 'Peter the Great' to Speak At Cal Poly April 7 as Part of Earth Day

SAN LUIS OBISPO – Botanist and ecologist Peter Raven, Time magazine's 1999 "Hero for the Planet," will mark Earth Day 2006 with a presentation at Cal Poly on Friday, April 7.

Raven's talk, "Biodiversity, Sustainability and the Modern University," will be at 7:30 p.m. in Mott Gym. The lecture, dealing with some of the most pressing environmental issues of our time, is free and open to the public.

The Washington University professor is a world leader in the environmental movement. An article about him in Discover is titled "Peter the Great." He received the National Medal of Science from the President of the United States in 2000. He was appointed a MacArthur Fellow ("The Genius Award"). Together with Paul Erlich, he developed the theory of coevolution in the 1970s. Coevolution is described as a change in the genetic composition of one species as a result of a genetic change in another.

Raven is president of Missouri Botanical Gardens. He has served as chair of the American Association for the Advancement of Science, the largest association of professional scientists in the world.

During his visit to Cal Poly, he will study challenges faced by the university in its efforts to advance biodiversity and sustainability through education, research and institutional behavior. He plans to tour the campus, meet with senior officials and representatives of groups engaged in these efforts, and offer suggestions for future progress.

Raven's visit is sponsored by the Provost's Office and the Sustainability Committee of the Academic Senate.

The Earth Day celebration is one of many ways in which the university continues to implement the provisions of the Talloires Declaration, a 10-point program involving hundreds of universities worldwide dedicated to promoting education for sustainability. The Talloires Declaration was signed by Cal Poly President Warren J. Baker in 2004.

For more information, contact Steven Marx at 756-2411 or smarx@calpoly.edu.

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